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February 14, 2018

Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Avenue, NW Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268

POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

RE: Docket RM 2017-3

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the DAV (Disabled American Veterans) and the more than 1 million disabled veteran members, 1300 chapters, and nearly 4 million disabled veterans and their family members that we serve, we urge the Commission to reconsider the proposed rate increases for nonprofit organizations. Our organization relies on the United States Postal Service to raise funds and to communicate with our donors and supporters.

DAV is a nonprofit charity that provides a lifetime of support for veterans of all generations and their families, helping more than 1 million veterans in positive, life-changing ways each year. The organization provides more than 670,000 rides for veterans attending medical appointments provided by DAV volunteers. Nearly 18 million rides have been provided by DAV through the years. Since the program's inception in 1987, DAV departments and chapters have donated 3,286 vehicles to the VA at a cost of over \$73.1 million. It is one of the country's largest voluntary transportation programs serving 197 VA medical centers and outpatient clinics.

We also assist veterans with more than 250,000 benefit claims annually. In 2016~~7~~, DAV helped attain more than \$4 billion in new and retroactive benefits to care for veterans, their families and survivors. All free of charge because of the donations we receive from the caring public.

DAV is also a leader in connecting veterans with meaningful employment, hosting job fairs and providing resources to ensure they have the opportunity to participate in the American Dream their sacrifices have made possible.

DAV empowers our nation's heroes and their families by helping to provide the resources they need and ensuring our nation keeps the promises made to them.

The Postal Service plays a vital role in supporting the philanthropic sector. For DAV, it is the primary method we use to communicate with our supporters and raise the funds needed to carry out our mission. We have grave concerns about the negative impact the proposed rate increases – substantially above the rate of inflation – will have on our ability to accomplish our mission. If adopted as proposed, these rate increases will force our organization to reduce mail volume which will inevitably result in reduced revenue, and in turn, will force us to consider reducing the number of rides provided to medical appointments, the career fairs that ensure meaningful employment, or the free benefits counseling services and disaster relief on which so many veterans depend on. We believe the current rate setting system where postal rates are tied to the Consumer Price Index should be maintained. It has succeeded in generating the funds necessary for the Postal Service to meet its ongoing operational needs, while also providing those that rely on the Postal Service with a stable and predictable rate structure. This is critical to our organization's ability to continue to use and rely on the mail.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and we appreciate your review and consideration on behalf of our organization.

Sincerely,

Tracey Burgoon
Director of Direct Marketing
DAV (Disabled American Veterans)